

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 100. (canceled)

101. (currently amended) A solid phase microextraction sampling device for collecting a component from an animal or animal tissue, said sampling device comprising:

at least one fibre having a coated end which is at least partially coated ~~with an~~ with a polymeric extraction phase for extracting said component; and

a positioning device for guiding said coated end into position within a blood vessel of the animal or animal tissue, said positioning device comprising:

a catheter for placement within the blood vessel, through which said fibre extends, said catheter having an open end for positioning within the blood vessel, and said catheter being immobilized during sampling with respect to the blood vessel; and

a fibre holding region attached to said fibre, said fibre holding region being movable with respect to the catheter, to move said coated end of the fibre into or out of the blood vessel;

wherein said fibre is a flexible wire.

102. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said fibre is at least partially coated with a polymeric biocompatible protection layer.

103. (currently amended) The sampling device of claim 102, wherein said biocompatible protection layer comprises polypyrrole or derivatised cellulose, cellulose and said extraction phase comprises either (a) a polymeric composition selected from the group consisting of substituted or unsubstituted poly (dimethylsiloxane), polyacrylate, poly (ethylene-glycol), carbon, poly(divinylbenzene) and polypyrrole or (b) a bioaffinity agent on the surface of the extraction phase, said bioaffinity agent being selected from the group consisting of a selective cavity, a molecular recognition moiety, a molecularly imprinted polymer and an immobilized antibody.

104. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said extraction phase is a matrix for a MALDI-TOFMS analysis.

105. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said extraction phase contains a calibrant.

106. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said extraction phase contains a fluorescent label or an enzyme.

107. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, further comprising an openable housing for said fibre.

108. (canceled)

109. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, comprising a plurality of said fibres capable of being simultaneously positioned in separate locations in said animal or animal tissue.

110. - 117. (canceled)

118. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, additionally comprising a needle in which said fibre is housed, said needle being insertable into said catheter.

119. (previously presented) The sampling device of claim 101, comprising a plurality of said fibres for positioning at the same location in said animal or animal tissue.

120. (new) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said extraction phase comprises substituted or unsubstituted poly (dimethylsiloxane), polyacrylate, poly (ethylene glycol), carbon, poly(divinylbenzene) or polypyrrrole.

121. (new) The sampling device of claim 101, wherein said polymeric extraction phase additionally comprises a bioaffinity agent selected from the group consisting of a selective cavity, a molecular recognition moiety, a molecularly imprinted polymer and an immobilized antibody.